

NAME: Kizuka, Tokushige DATE OF BIRTH: 1901 PLACE OF BIRTH: Fukuoka  
 Age: 73 Sex: M Marital Status: M (?) Education: 9 Years

## PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 1917 Age: 16 M.S. Y.Y. Port of entry: San Fran.  
 Occupation/s: 1. Farmer 2. Foreman 3. Farmer (Have own land)  
 Place of residence: 1. Watsonville, Ca. 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Religious affiliation: Westview Presbyterian Church (Watsonville)  
 Community organizations/activities: Chairman of the Farming Division of the

## EVACUATION:

Japanese Association & Member of "Butoku Kai" (Japanese Marshal Ar  
Association) & Member of "Heimusha Kai" (Service Organization)

\*\*Name of assembly center: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of relocation center: Poston, Arizona

Dispensation of property: Bank Names of bank/s: \_\_\_\_\_

Jobs held in camp: 1. Treasurer of Canteen (Internment camp) 2. Fireman (Poston)

Jobs held outside of camp: \_\_\_\_\_

Left camp to go to: Watsonville, California

POST-WAR: \*\*Internment Camps: Bismark, North Dakota; Roseburg, New Mexico; and

Date returned to West Coast: 1945

Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Address/es: 1. Watsonville, California

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Religious affiliation: Westview Presbyterian Church (Watsonville)

Activities: 1. Senior Citizen's Club

2. \_\_\_\_\_

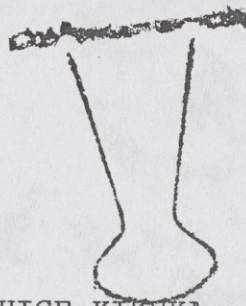
3. \_\_\_\_\_

If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 2/10/75 Place: Watsonville, Ca.

*Translator: H. Takarabe*





NAME: TOKUSHIGE KIZUKA

AGE: 74

DATE OF BIRTH: 1901

PLACE OF BIRTH: Fukuoka Ken

YEAR OF ENTRY INTO THE USA: 1917, 16 years old

MAJOR OCCUPATION: Farmer

CAMP: Internment Camps  
Poston

DATE OF INTERVIEW: Feb 10, 1975

PLACE OF INTERVIEW: Watsonville

INTERVIEWER: Heihachiro Takarabe

TRANSLATOR: Heihachiro Takarabe



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Q: The purpose of this project is to preserve the record of Issei experiences so that youner generation of Japanee Americans and also the whites who could benefit from such records.

A: Who is sponsering this project?

Q: Well, its us.

A: Are you a minister?

Q: Yes, I am. It's also sponsored by Japanese Presbyterian Conference. Well then, I would like you to state your name, Please.

A: My name is Tokushige Kizuka.

Q: Where is your home town?

A: Fukuoka Ken.

Q: When were you born?

A: I was born on 1901, the 34th year of Meiji.

Q: Well then you are 73 years old.

A: I'm almost 74 years old.

Q: When did you come to this country?

A: I came to this country when I was 16 years old.

Q: What was your father like?

A: My father was here in Watsonville. He leased an apple orchard and maneging it.



Q: When you were born, was your father still in Japan?

A: Yes, but he came to America when I was about 5 years old. So it must have been the 38th year of Meiji that he came to America.

Q: Do you remember about your father?

A: Yes, I do. When I came to America I stayed with my father for 3 years. I remember him from that time, but not in Japan. The only thing was that my father went the Russo-Japan War and came back victorious. We went to welcome him back. Well, there was a long parade and I was carried with a big drum on a handcart. However, I don't remember anything about my father from that time.

Q: How about your mother?

A: My mother died a year after I was born. So I was raised by my step mother.

Q: Was your step mother a kind person?

A: No, she was not.

Q: Were you scolded by her often?

A: No. It's not that she was mean or anything. I just didn't have a real intimate relationship with them, that's all. In America, I lived with them for 3 years, but even then, it was not very intimate. When you were raised apart from each other, you will lose intimacy, even if it were parents and child relationship.



Q: How far did you go in your education?

A: School? I graduated elementary school, 6 years, and then 2 more years after that. Then, I went to one more year where they trained teachers. However, I could not complete that course because I came to the USA.

Q: Do you remember anything from elementary school or middle school?

A: I was a good student, so when the entire student body gathered in the playground, I used to give command (for bowing heads to the principle.) Other thing was that teachers used pin my report card on the wall, so I was very proud.

Q: Do you remember your teachers?

A: Yes, I do. When I was in elementary school, there was no special teachers. One teacher taught everything. I remember a teacher by the name of Tokan. He was a prodigy of a very famous teacher. However, he had such a new ideology and he even demonstrated outside of school. So he could not advance to a good position. So this teacher was sent to a school in Taiwan. I really respected him very much. His thought was just too advanced for that time. He was not a socialist, either.

Q: What was interesting and fun events?

A: Well, it must be a school picnic. We used to climb mountains. Or at that time there was this thing called



"Chutai Undo". We used to go into a deep mountain with some food. It was a military training. Those were very interesting.

Q: Do you have any sad memory?

A: No, I can't remember off hand. However, when my father didn't send money to us from America, we had to suffer hardship. This was very hard.

Q: You must live with your step mother, right?

A: Yes. However, my step mother left Japan for America when I was the third grade in elementary school. So I don't remember too much about her, either. So I lived with my grand mother, my father's side. I also had a sister, so three of us lived together.

I also remember that my grandfather who was a carpenter. He was a good carpenter and he had 5 or 6 apprentices. However, he had a stroke and he could not work anymore and died when I was in the second grade. After that we, three of us, lived together. The only impression I have about him is that he was ill in bed, that's all. He could not work. My grandmother was a good mother. She was like my mother to me.

Q: When you were going to school, did you want to come to the USA?

A: No. I never thought I would come to America. At that



time the government was encouraging us to go to the South America. However, I didn't have any definite idea at that time.

Q: Then what was the reason why you came to the USA.

A: Oh, I was summoned by my father. I really didn't want to come, though. However, my father sent me all the documents necessary for me to come to the USA. My grandmother didn't want me to come, either. So I extended it as long as possible, but I had to come here after all. I was 16 years old then.

Q: What did you think America might be?

A: Well, I really didn't think about it. I came here because I had to come. I was very sad. I came with 2 other boys, my classmates, and also a boy who lived right in front of us. Three of us left our home town together. One went to Canada.

Q: You said you came from Fukuoka, but were there many people from Fukuoka?

A: I think so. I know 6 or 7 people from my own village. There was one in Watsonville from my village, but he passed away.

Q: Where did you get on the ship?

A: Nagasaki. The name of the ship was Tenyo Maru. However, she run aground near Yokosuka. So we had to stay on the



ship for about one week. Then we came to Yokohama and then to America. The ship must have been OK. There were many divers checking on the bottom of the ship. It must not been dammaged. Well, actually from Nagasaki, it went to Kobe, Yokosuka and then to Honollulu and then to San Francisco.

Q: How was it on the ship?

A: It was very enjoyable. At that time there were many women who were picture brides. There were many of them on the ship.

Q: Did you have a chance to talk to them?

A: Yes. They were marrying to men whom they never seen. So they were talking to each other about their husbands. They were all happy, though, on the ship. However, after they landed, many of them experienced tragedy. The husbands who came to pick them up were different from the picture, or they were older than women thought them to be. There may be those men who lided about their age, too. So I've heard about the tragedies of their lives.

One of them cried all day long, because on the picture his profile was shown. So she could not see the other eye which was damaged. You couldn't help these things to happen because they were matched by pictures. It was parents or older brothers or sisters who made the decision



for their marriage. There were also those who sent the picture dressed like respectable businessmen, even though they were manual laborers. I know there were many of those cases, too. Not all the people were like that, though. However, there were many cases like that.

Q: What happened to those women who were really disappointed?

A: Well, hotel owners, or friends who came with them comforted them. I really don't know what happened to them afterwards.

Q: How long were you on the ship?

A: 17 days. If I count the day I left Nagasaki, it would be more, including the days of the ship when it was aground.

Q: Did you make any friends on the ship?

A: No, I didn't make any. I had friends from the village, so three of us played together.

Q: What did you do?

A: We run around the Deck, or talked. That's about all. We were seasick, too. I wasn't too sick, but I was feeling a little nauseated.

Q: What else do you remember from the ship?

A: Well, you see, the life style is a lot different from that of village. The "Ofuro" (bath) was salt water, and



even that we could bathe only once or twice a week. So we had to wipe our bodies with the fresh water. It was just like going to swimming in the ocean. Food was very good. We didn't have that much of appetite, because we have enough exercise. Sometimes those sailors made "sushi" or other things and sold them to us. So if one had money, he could buy them.

Q: Were there any drinking on the ship?

A: No, I didn't know any. There were quite few people who were going back to America for the second time. They told us many things about America. I really appreciated that. We were on the third class cabin, (on the bottom of the ship), so our beds were arranged like silkworm beds. Men's room and women's room were separated.

Q: What did these people who were going back to America told you?

A: Well, they told us kinds of jobs they had. Some told us that they had laundry business. At that time most of men were still single. So those who were going back were those who came back to Japan to look for wives.

Q: How did you feel about America when you heard from those reternees?

A: Well, you know, I didn't know my parents very well, so I was very uncertain. I was also expecting a great deal of changes in my life.



Q: What did you do at Honollulu?

A: We stayed in Honolulu for over night. Those returnees could speak English, so they took us around. We went sight seeing in the town, ate dinner at Chinese Restaurant. They took care of us well. There were lots of Bananas there. I took out 50¢ and asked for Bananas. Then they gave me a big bunch. So we put a stick through it and carried it back to the ship on our shoulders. However, it was still green and we could not eat even one. On top of that Americans did not allow us to bring it with us. So we had to leave it on the ship.

Q: How much money did you have with you?

A: At that time we had to have "Misekin" (showing money) which was not so high, then. I think it was less than \$50. Other than that I had some American money, so I didn't have to worry about spending money in Hawaii. It was sent to me by my father.

Q: Was that Chinese food very good?

A: Yes, it was.

Q: You didn't go through the physical there?

A: No, I didn't. However, the thing which surprised me most was that there was a Japanese Shinto Shrine there. It was very strange that I would see a shrine in the USA.



I also saw Japanese people wearing Kimono. It looked very strange to me. I didn't expect to see this in America. They were speaking in Japanese, too.

Q: Then you left for the Main Land, right?

A: Yes. It took about a week, I think. It took about 10 days to Hawaii. We arrived at San Francisco. There, at the Immigration Office, we had complete physical examination, from stool to eyes and everything.

Q: Was it at Angel Island?

A: Yes, it was. We stayed there for about 3 to 4 days.

Q: Were you afraid?

A: No. I was with my friends, so I wasn't that afraid. Then my father came to pick me up. I could not recognize him, though. He couldn't recognize me, either. In the waiting room, we were brought together, then I knew he was my father. I felt like meeting with a stranger. I didn't feel like meeting my father, because we were separated for 13 to 14 years and I just couldn't remember anything about him. I felt strange, and also there was no intimacy as a father and his son. He said, "You must be Toku!" I said, "Yes." That's it. Then we went to Oakland and visited our family friend from the same village. He had a shoe repair shop. We went to greet him and stayed over there for a few days. Then we went



to Watsonville.

Q: What did he do in Watsonvill?

A: My father was maneging an apple orchard. I worked for him. My first impression was that America was a big country. However, it was a hardwork. I started our with pruning, because it was that season. There were many Japanese people in a camp who did just that. I was near sighted and had a glasses on already. I was collecting brush and one of the branches wiped my glasses down and broke it. I was really in trouble because of that. I lived with my father and stepmother for 3 years until he and my stepmother went back to Japan. After that I stayed with my uncle for 3 more years because my father was in partnership with him.

Q: What were the sad or bad experiences in those days?

A: I really wanted to go back to Japan. I really don't remember anything good from that time. I was only 16 years old then, and I didn't have even mustle power, either. You see, I hadn't have work experience in Japan, so it was doublydifficult. My father used to get up early in the morning. We started working about 7:00am. We worked 10 hours a day. I was still a young boy, so they didn't demand too much from me. They game me a spending money, too. They gave me enough to spend, but I didn't get payed, though. They also had a packing shed, so they had a quite few people working for them.



They used to ship them out to England and other places. Of course they exported them through a white middleman. They also had horses and trucks. The workers they hired were all Japanese.

All the apples were graded and wrapped in paper and packed. There must have been over 50 people during the season. It lasted from September to December. During the winter trees had to be pruned, so we had a few workers who stayed with us all the year around. There were 6 to 8 of those people.

You see, my father wasn't very straight with me. I didn't know what kind of arrangement my father made with my uncle and left me behind. I worked very hard and yet I wasn't given the status as his partner. So I decided to leave my uncle's place, leaving everything which was legitimately mine. I decided to become independent. My uncle didn't say anything. He was a very hard and unreasonable man. I decided that it would be better for me to leave him. In fact the sooner the better. I worked for him 3 years for nothing, though he did give me some spending money.

Q: Did your father say anything?

A: No. He didn't say anything. However, he said, "When I return, I'll get 'Yoshi' for your sister, so you do



whatever pleases you." I told him, "I would not look after your welbeing when you retire, so please take care of yourself as you wish. I'll take care of myself." So I cut my relationship with him right there then. He loved to drink sake and sometimes he became unreasonable when he got drunk. There were many people like that though before.

Q: The you haven't had anything to do with him afterward.

A: I haven't been back since then, and he hasn't come back here either. He got a "yoshi" for my sister and they were living together.

Q: What did you do after you left your uncle?

A: I raised lettus. Well, actually I worked for Mr. Masaki Yamaguch. He is a very famus man in Watsonville. He really took care of me. He is 99 years old this year. This man asked me if I was interested in working with him as a partner in lettus business. I was all for it. It was very good for both of us. It was a share crop arrangement, 50-50. It went very well. This land was sold, so we got the land right next to it. We did that for a few years, and then we rented a pice of land and farmed by ourselves. That year was successful, but we produced too much lettus, so the price came down and it wasn't very good anymore.



Then Mr. Yamaguchi became very ill and had to be hospitalized for a long time. All the earnings from the farm had to be spent for his doctor and hospital bills. In addition to that income from a farming business was very unstable. Meanwhile the land lease was up, so Mr. Yamaguchi suggested that we terminate this arrangement. So we terminated this kind of farming. Mr. Yamaguchi began to stay with Mr. Mitani who was a big farmer there. He took his wife and children and convalesced there. I worked as a formen of a whiteman's lettuce company. I did that for 2 years. Then I bought a piece of land and raised tomatoes and lettuce. I bought a piece of land in 1927.

Q: What were some of the hardship when you raised lettuce?

A: The first problem for us was a capital. We needed a big sum of money especially when we had a bad year. Fortunately we had a white middleman whom I knew since I worked for my father. This man loaned us money frequently.

Q: When did you get married?

A: It was in 1923. It was soon after my father went back to Japan.

Q: How did you get to know one another?

A: It was a kind of "Free Marriage" (as opposed to arranged marriage).



Q: Is that right! It was very rare at that time, wasn't it.

A: I was 23 years old. She came here as "Yobiyose". She is one year younger than I.

Q: In general Issei couples had a big age difference, hadn't they?

A: Yes. Our case must have been very rare that we are only one year different. I was still working at the apple ranch. You see, a baby was born, but I seemed to have no future at my uncle's ranch, so I had to leave. There were some who suggested that I should sue my uncle for my wage, but we were relatives and I didn't want to do such a thing. Especially he was very old and I was very young. I had lots of opportunity to work and build up an estate for myself. So I told them that I wouldn't sue them.

Q: You worked for them 3 years for nothing. Your wife must have had very difficult time.

A: Well, you see we ate together, but we didn't have enough spending money. I had one baby then. I have 2 sons and a daughter now. However, I lost my younger boy in the Navy. He died of sickness.

Q: All the work you've done was in Watsonville, right?

A: Yes. I never left Watsonville.



Q: Was Watsonville a very good place for Japanese people?

A: Yes, it was. You remember the Alien Land Law?

The first one was created in 1915 and the second one in 1924. At that time we couldn't even own it by corperation. It was after that, in 1927, that I was able to buy land. The man I leased the land from was a man by the name of Hogan. He was a very powerful man in Watsonville. We knew him since my father's time. He also helped me when I was raising lettus. This man sold a piece of land to a Japanese, however, the ony thing he could do was to make a small downpayment and that's all. He couldn't even make a payment on the interest. Mr. Hogan said that the land came back to him, so would I like to buy the land. I said, you, but I couldn't buy it because of the Alien Land Law. He said, Well I can do something about that, so why don't you buy it from me. So I went to consult with a lawyer by the name of Mr. Sun who used be a judge here. Well, he said to buy it. He told me not to worry about it as long as he lived. And if I pay tax for 10 years, then I wouldn't have any problem.

That's what he said. So I bought that land in 1927. I had to buy it through in my son's name. I also had to ask a Nisei to be his trustee. There were many people who bought the land in the way I did. There were many prominent member of community here who were very good to Japanese people. Even after the World War II many



Japanese came back here. You see people in Salinas were very bad so many Japanese who lived in Salinas came back to Watsonville. I think about a half of Japanese in Watsonville are really additional people who came here after the war.

Q: What did you grow on the piece of land?

A: I raised lettuce, tomato and string beans. I was there until I had to evacuate.

Q: In 1924 when Japanese were no longer allowed to come to the USA, was there any big influence on the Japanese community because of this?

A: Well, I was too young to recognize anything. At that time many Filipinos worked for us for 15¢ or 20¢ per hour, so farmers had it good. I had about 20 acre. We were OK even at the time of the Depression, too. Japanese particularly those who had land, had it easier than others.

It wasn't like now. At that time one family could live on 10 to 20 acres land. However, now you need about 500 acres of lettuce to make a living. At that time there were some Mexicans, but on the most part Filipinos were our workers. Around that time many young and strong Filipinos came to America.



Q: I would like to ask a little bit more about your wife.  
How did you get to know her?

A: Well, she is in a way related to me. She is my stepmother's other brothers daughter. So I got to know her that way. I'm sure my stepmother was glad to know about this. My father-in-law died a few years ago. He was 92 years old.

Q: When was it that international relation between Japan and the US got really bad?

A: It must have been around 1939.

Q: Were your children born in a hospital?

A: Yes, they were.

Q: I gather then that Issei in Watsonville had a very good reception by the community.

A: Yes, I think so. It was partly due to the effort of the earlier pioneers. However, we cooperated with the white people here in many community activities. For example, when there was a Red Cross Fund Raising Campaign, we sent representatives from Japanese community and they went around farm labor camps and raised fund. The same can be said about the Community Chest campaign, when they had a 4th of July Parade, Japanese Community also participated in it. We also encouraged people to buy things in the stores in Watsonville. It was the year before



the begining of the war when there were many Japanese lettus growers in Watsonville. It so happened that all the good lettus was taken to Salinus to be packed. So the merchants in Watsonville asked Japanese Association if they could let the Watsonville merchants process the half of the lettus grown by Japanese farmers. If Japanese farmers could let that happen, then Watsonville would prosper. . . .

At that time I was the chairman of the farming division of the Japanese Association, so I had a consultation with white folks, and we went around the Japanese farmers and persuaded them to have lettus processed in Watsonville. White merchants also proposed that they should build a coop packing shed and we should send our lettus there to be packed. Well, we cooperated and it was just about ready to be in operation when the Pearl Harbor was attacked. Of course all our effort to build coop packing shed was in vain.

When I came back from the camp, I went to Bob Hadson, who was the chairman of the coop at that time. He said if we had that coop advanced to the point of operation, then this company could have mannaged the land owned by Japanese. I was really that no preparation could be made for japanese evacuation. So we really had a good



relationship with the white community. We cooperated with them in many ways, so we were really trusted by them.

Q: Were you a chairman of the Japanese Association?

A: Yes, I was a chairman of the Board of Directors. There were a secretary, a chairman of the Japaense School, a chairman of family affairs (a counselor for troubled families), a citizenship chairman who took care of the Nisei who got in trouble with laws, and also a farm bureau chairman. It was a very large and comprehensive organization. I was the chairman of the Board of Directors ever since I was 29 years old until the war started. This means that from 1930 till 1941, during which I was the chairman of the association.

When the war started I was picked up by the FBI, because of my involvement with Japanese Association.

Q: What kind of problems did you have to face as the Chairman of the Japanese Association?

A: Well, the most difficult thing was to finance japanese School. The reason was because Japanese people weren't that rich at that time. So we could not collect fees, so we had to do some special fund raising or solicited special contributions. However, almost 1/3 of the money we raised had to come from the officers of the Japanese Association. So I spent lots of my own money for it. At the same time, we were never appreciated.



You know Mr. Kyusaburo Sakata. He was the backbone of our Association. He alone contributed 10% of all the necessary funds.

Q: Did you receive any honorarium for being the chairman?

A: No, not at all. Wherever we went, we had to buy our own gas, and spent our own money. When we were invited to go to banquets in honor of some dignitary, representing the association, I still had to pay my own dinner. We even had to pay for the guests from our own pocket. Not only that, we had to contribute very first when we were soliciting contributions for certain projects. The only persons who got paid was the permanent secretary/manager and also the principle and teachers of the Japanese school.

Q: Then you had to work hard for it and had to pay for it as well.

A: Yes, that's the way it was. And I think it was the same everywhere. It's a lot different now.

Q: How many families were there in Watsonville?

A: Well, long time ago, before 1920's, there were lots of single men. However, they say that there were more Japanese here then than now. When I was a chairman there were about 300 families.



Q: Why was it that all the lettus were shipped to Salinas?

A: Well, because Salinas was a larger place and there were more packing companies there, too. So they came to buy from Salinas. You see, Watsonville has such a good climate for lettus that we raised very good lettus here. So they came to buy them on the field with cash. Of course farmers needed cash and it was a tremendous competition from Salinas. So soon all the lettus was brought up by Salinas companies.

There were some white folks who raised lettus, but the most of them were raised by Japanese farmers. Japanese also raised strawberries, too. In fact 2/3 of Japanese produce were strawberries and 1/3 lettus.

Q: So Japanese farmers were very important for the Watsonville economy

A: Yes, they were. At that time any banks will loan up to \$50 for any Japanese farmers in case they didn't have any money to buy food. And also any store would let you buy on credit, if you were Japanese. It's the same now. Especially when we came back from the Camp, people like the chairman of the chamber of commerce, or high school teachers and businessmen from the town came to pick us up with their own cars. On top of that they made



coffee and sandwiches for us. Then they said, "WELCOME.  
HOME!!!"

Q: You must have been well known among white folks.

A: Well, I would say a small number of people.

Q: However, you were the link between Japanese and the  
white communities.

A: Well, even though I understood very little English, I  
did as much as I could to put people together for  
negotiations. If I didn't understand what they said,  
then I just had to take someone who understood English.  
Well. When I look back, I'm surprised at myself.

Q: Were you very well accepted by Japanese people?

A: I suppose there were those who liked me and also those  
who didn't like me. Some must have said that I was too  
loud and presumptuous.

Q: However, I think because of your effort, the whites in  
Watsonville were very understanding about Japanese people.

A: It's not just me. The cooperative spirit and the fellow-  
ship was already developed by my predecessors. I'm really  
a late comer.

Q: Who do you think were those who worked toward such a  
cooperative spirit between Japanese and whites?



A: For instance, Mr. Kyusaburo Sakata, Unosuke Shikuma, those two are very famous people. They were the chairman of the board of directors before me. Mr. Kamiichiro Inouye who owned a store here was from Hiroshima Ken and was a Buddhist. He was very socially aware. He really contributed toward social welfare of Japanese families. The I would also mention Mr. Ipatsu Hajimura who was a photographer, he was from Saga Ken. Person like him poured all his possessions and worked towards the betterment of relationship between Japanese and the whites.

All these people are dead now. I'm really a younger generation in this kind of tradition. Because of the efforts of these men, Japanese community benefited.

Q: I suppose then, Japanese people rarely discriminated or oppressed?

A: Well, those people who said, "Jap" or "No Jap" were Filipinos. I saw these signs on the Filipino stores or restaurant. There was a time when gas station owners conspired not to sell gas to Japanese after the war. However, they used to bring us gas at night.

Q: Now, how did you feel when the Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A: I was shocked! I think it was a lunch time. I was eating lunch and turned on the radio, and then I heard that the war broke out between Japan and America. I was really



shocked. At the same time I thought Japan had done such a foolish thing. I didn't know what would happen to Japanese people here.

Q: Did you think that Japanese people would be harrassed?

A: No, I didn't think so. At that time there were many English old timers and influencial people lived around us and they were all good to us. So I wasn't afraid of that kind of thing. However, late immigrants such as slubonians or spanish, were not very good to us. Of course they might not have had too much education either. However, those old timers were very understanding.

Q: What did you do then?

A: Well, I was the chairman of the Japanese Association. I was also a member of the "Butoku Kai" (Japanese Marshal art Association), and at the same time our Japanese school was built on our property. I was also a member of "Heimusha Kai", well, we called it "Hoshi Kai" (Service Organization). It was an organization to raise fund to the family of soldgers who died or injured in Manturian War. I was the chairman of that association, too. So within two weeks of the Pearl Harbor attack, I was interned.

Q: Just a minute, please. You mentioned about 5 organizations.

A: Yes. I mentioned "Heimusha Kai", Japanese School which was the only Japanese school in Watsonville. There were



There were about 20 students who came to study on Saturday. It was sponsored by the Japanese Association, and the class room was constructed by the parents. The salary of the teacher was paid by the Japanese Association. We just had one teacher at a time. I was also an officer of the "Butoku Kai". They practiced Kendo (Japanese style fencing). There were about 20 students who came to practice Kendo. It was located in down town. They also practiced at our school, too.

Q: You must have been very busy.

A: Yes, so my wife had to work very hard. (Laugh) I was very active and busy, however, I enjoyed working for other people.

Q: How much money did you raise in the "Heimusha Kai"?

A: We collected 20¢ to 50¢ a month. It was a voluntary contribution. So we raised \$25 to \$50 a month. Then we forwarded to the head quarter in San Francisco.

Q: How much did the headquarter collect?

A: They collected a lot. When they showed a movie for fund raising, they collected \$800 at once. They used to get a movie from Japan and an officer used to go around the country and show it. Once it was shown in Watsonville, At that time Japan was in the Manturian War and there were many solgers who suffered injuries and also families



who lost their sons. So at that time we raised about \$800 in Watsonville. I would guess that they must collected \$10,000 a month. It was a big money at that time.

Q: If you go to "Yasukuni Jinsha"(Yasukuni Shrine where soldiers were buried) you'll see a big "Torii"(arch). There is a waterfountain on the right side of it, which is mounted on a large rock. This fountain was contributed from us. It would cost 100 million Yen now. There is a writing on its back saying that it was donated by the Heimusha Kai of the USA. It is not that conspicuous. You must wet it before you can see it clearly.

Q: How long did this organization existed?

A: This continued from the Manchurian War to the beginning of the World War II. So it must be from 1931 to 1941.

Q: How about Butoku Kai?

A: Well, I know it went on for a long time. However, it the beginning when my children were small, I did not participate in it. It was from the time when my children started to go to school and I wanted them to have somekind of discipline. So I'm a late comer to it, too.

Q: You have participated in "Butoki Kan", "Heimusha Kai" and also in "Nihonjinkai". Your expense for those



organizations must have been tremendous.

A: Well, I have not kept any record, but I know it's a large sum of money. At that time I must earned about \$20,000 a year. So if I add expenses like gas, dinner, fee and other, it would be more than \$5,000. At that time Japanese people sacrificed a lot for community projects (Japanese School, baseball leagues and etc.). They contributed as much as they can and its different from this generation.

Q: Are you a member of this church (Westview Presbyterian Church in Watsonville)?

A: Yes, I am from about 1920. At that time there were many younger Yobiyoses, than me, who were 17 to 23 years of age. There were lots of them here in Watsonville. So we gathered these men and created "Futaba Club". It is an organization of Yobiyose young men of about 35 people. We were very gree then. We held meetings at Chrisitian Church and heard ministers. At times we held meetings at the Buddhist Temple and heard Buddhist preasts. We tried to keep a nutral position as to our religious affiliation. However, I had a good friend who stayed in the domitory at the Christian church, so I leaned a little more toward Christianity.



At that time the pastor of the church was Rev. Fujimoto. Because of his suggestion, we, about 6 of us, were baptized at the same time. Others belonged to the Buddhist Temple. This organization, however, did not last too long, because some quit going to school, or some had to work because their parents went back to Japan. It lasted about 3 years, however, after that we couldn't continue.

Q: I might be mistaken, but it seems to me in general Yo hiyose young men were better adjusted than the real pioneers. There were of course real good people like Mr. Sakata and Mr. Shikuma.

A: Well, that's because Yobiyose were a little bit more educated than the earlier pioneers. Many of them were high school graduates (13 years of education), or at least went through the middle of high school. I would say that many of pioneer Issei had only primary education (4 to 6 years). So Yobiyose had better foundation and better moral conviction. They even understood some international relations, so their conduct could be a little better than that of the Pioneer Issei.

Q: I heard many wild stories of pioneer Issei. However, Yobiyose seemed to be better adjusted.

A: I tend to agree with you. They drunk Sake and gambled a lot. But I haven't heard too much of those from Yo hiyose. There were some, of course, however, inspite of the fact



that their fathers drunk lots of Sake and gambled a lot, they refrained from them. This is very interesting. Of course we heard speeches from ministers and priests. We also organized speech contest, too. We went to beach by bicycles or went to picnic. We stretched out ourselves in these ways, and it was lots of fun. We published news papers carying articles, poems and others. Because of this, we produced a very famous Haiku poet from our group. Many of his poems were published on the Shin Manyo Shu in Japan. This man was our comrad. Mr. Isamu Nagashi, who is a teacher of "Tanka" in San Francisco, was also our friend in Watsonville. He is one of the authority in America. So you see, young people in our group were very serious people.

Q: I don't think young people now would know about this. Is "Hoshikai" and "Heimusha Kai" the same?

A: Yes, they are. The real name at the headquater was "Heieki Gimusha Kai" (Draftees Association). However, this did not describe the real nature of the association and I did not agree with it. So at our level, a branch organization, we called it "Hoshikai" (service Organization). It was only here at Watsonville, because I did not have the obligation for the military service.

Q: Was there any one here who was drafted by the Japanese Army?



A: No, I don;t know any.

Q: Do you remember anything about Japanese community before the war?

A: Well, I remember lots of things. At that time there were lots of problems of gambling, drinking and also triangle relationships. There were lots of cases like that.

There were some Nisei who committed crimes. The case I know was that a Nisei who stole dividend of a company and spent it. We organized ourself to have him released from the jail. The secretary of the Nikkeijin Kai and Us went to the police department and asked them to release him so that we could send him back to Japan. Well, they released him, so we sent him back to Japan.

The thing I feel real good about is that there was a murder case in Watsonville. It was because of a triangle relationship, he killed his wife. He was prosecuted and was given a life sentence. If he was a friendly person and knew community people more, he could have gotten off with lesser sentence. However, no one sympathized with him, so he received such a heavy sentence. There was no one to speak on his behalf. So he was placed in San Quintin. I didn't know him very well, in fact, I met him only once or twice. He came from the village



next to mine. It must have after 10 years of imprisonment when he wrote to me. He said, that he saw my name on a newspaper. On "Meishi Kokan" (Name card exchange) on a news paper. He found out that I was from the next village, so he felt very closed to me and thought about many things which happend while he was in Japan. So I replied saying that if God allowes me to, I would like to come see him. Then I came to know that a minister from Berkeley visited San Quentin often. So I asked him to take my letter of encouragement to him. I did this for about 3 years. I also went to see him for about 3 times. His mind was very stormy still and I knew it was not the time for him to come out.

So I waited three years. Then I talked to elders of this church and trusted people of this community to write an affidavit for him. Well, this was accepted and we got the word that if we were to send him back to Japan, then he would be released. So 3 of us went and received him in our trust. However, the only thing that the Institution gave him was a suit. That's all and no money. So those of us who came from the same region got together and bought him underwears, coat, hat and suitcase. We also bought him a ticket and gave him some spending money.

I went to see him at the ship. He was also behind bar, on the ship. However, I was allowed to see him. I was



very glad to be able to do this for him. When I went back to Japan in 1956, this man came to see me. In fact he came to see me as soon as I arrived. He said, "I am living at the low economic level, but I'm living honestly and deligently. I would like you to be happy for me." It happened around 1938.

Q: What was your thought when you sent the Nisei back to Japan?

A: Well, probably this man would be sent to San Quentin, I thought. I also talked to his parents and they said that they had some property in Japan. So if he could be released, they would sent him to Japan. So that's why we sent him back to Japan.

Q: I suppose to have many Japanese in Jail would not be very good reputation of Japanese.

A: Yes, that's right. You know I haven't told these things to any one. Because people who knows about these were very few like Mr. Shikuma and Mr. Sakata. They both had past on, so I'm the only one who knows about it.

Q: Were there gambling joints in Watsonville?

A: Yes, there were. Churches here got involved in "Tobaku Bokumetsu Undo" (A movement against Gambling) and went out on streets and spoke to Japanese people who were passing by. There was a Japanese "Tokyo Club". It was



the Japanese gambling club. There were many Chinese gambling houses here. The China town here was full of gambling houses. If it weren't Chinese restaurant, then it was a gambling house. However, you see there was only one Japanese gambling house, Tokyo Club.

Q: Were those Japanese gangsters?

A: No, they weren't that bad. Of course the headquarter was in Los Angeles. The man who owned the Tokyo Club was a Taxi driver. That was his occupation.

Q: How big was the place?

A: Well, it was rather big, 3 big rooms, may be. They had "Gaham" or "Shkoi" or cards. There must have been quite a bit of customers. I haven't seen it myself, though. However, many Issei used to go there. The reason for this establishment was that it would be better for Japanese to drop money in Japanese place than in Chinese gambling joints. That was their excuse. We as the Japanese community opposed this vigorously, however, we were not heard.

Q: Whatelse do you remember about the Issei trouble makers?

A: There were some. I heard that there were some cases before I came to Watsonville. They were "gorotsuki" (hoodlums) who used to carry pistols and knives and harrassed Issei. There were also triangle relationships



and some were accused of stealing wives. However, after I came here, I didn't hear too many of these cases, especially after I began to work with Nihonjin Kai (Japanese Association).

Q: Why was it that there were no more problems after certain time?

A: For one thing, they have become a little better off economically. And then many of them called wives from Japan. These factors must contributed for the stability of Japanese community. It had become considerably peaceful.

Q: Did many picture brides come to Watsonville?

A: Yes, I think so. They did very well on the whole.

Q: Were there any picture brides who run away?

A: No, I don't know that personally. I'm sure there must be some, but it was very rare.

Q: Now then, I would like to ask you about the World War II. What happen to you after the Pearl Harbor attack?

A: I was picked up by a FBI agent about 2 weeks afterwards.

Q: Did you know that he was coming?

A: No, I did not know. I was put in a jail in Watsonville for 2 days. Then, we were sent to San Francisco, and then



from there to an internment camp in North Dakota.

Q: Did your family know where you were?

A: Yes. When I was in the Watsonville jail, a police officer said that we were to be sent to a cold place, so we must bring many warm cloths. So I called my home and asked my wife to bring me some winter cloths. So, my son brought me overcoat and many warm cloths in a suitcase. I didn't know where I was to be sent, but I knew it was going to be a cold country.

Q: How did you feel?

A: Well, I felt like crying. I was taken away from my family. I didn't know why I was being taken away. Later on I began to put things together by myself. I stayed in the internment camp for 2 years and 2 months. I was one of the last ones to leave the camp. In any case those of us who left there till the end were Japanese school teachers or those who were supposedly pro-Japan people, teachers and members of Heimusha Kai or Butoku Kai. They were looked upon as leaders of Japanese communities. Especially Buddhist priests were detained longer than anybody else. There were many hearings and those who were less involved with Japanese communities were sent back to the camps where their families were.



I was sent to Bismark in North Dakota. Then I was sent to Roseburg, New Mexico. Bismark was something to do with Immigration Office. Roseburg was under the Military supervision. Then I was transfered to Santa Fe.

Q: What kind of questions did they ask you at the hearing?

A: They asked me what I think of the Emperor of Japan. Which did I wish to win, Japan or America. These were some of the questions.

Q: How did you answer these squestions?

A: Well, I never thought that Japan would win. So I said, "I hope that peace will be restored as soon as possible."

Q: Which camp was the last Internment camp for you?

A: It was the one in Sant Fe, New Mexico.

Q: Did you stay there the longest?

A: No. I stayed in each place for 7 to 8 months. When I was in Bismark, there were many business related people from Japan, such as bankers or company representatives. They went back to Japan with ambassadors Nomura and Kurusu on the exchange ship.

The second camp, Roseburg, was related to the US Military. So there were many Japanese POW's, though our barracks



were different. We were able to see them sometimes.

However, those POW's would never talk to us about themselves.

But their spirits were down. We felt sorry for them.

They didn't have anything, so we put our some money and bought them their underwears and other things.

Q: You mean you had some money, even though you were interned?

A: Yes, it was our own money. In the beging we were able to draw \$18 or \$20 a month. When we went to Roseburg, we could not get any money at all. However, there were limited distribution of cigarets. There were some people who came to see us and brought us some money, a small amount. We couldn't carry too much, though, because we had regular search of our possessions.

Q: When you left Watsonville, what happened to your farm and possessions?

A: Well, we just left it there. That's all we could do. It was Dec. 20, when I was picked up, so by that time I planted carrot seeds and others. I also cultivated a new leased land by cutting down trees. However, I could not make use of that land at all. All the work we put in to it was in vain.

Q: What happened to your land?

A: I sent a letter to my family saying that they should let our bank manege the land for us. So before they



evacuated they took the necessary papers to do this. So the bank collected the rent and payed the tax and also the payments on the land. They also saved any money left in our name.

Q: What happened to your family?

A: My family was evacuated to the Assembly Canter in Salinas. Then they were moved to the camp in Poston, Arizona. You see, I was detained for 2 years, so I really didn't know what happened to them.

Q: Were you able to exchange letters?

A: Yes, we could. But our letters were censored. They cut out important messages. The letters which were sent to me by my family had many holes. They said that Koreans were used as translators and also sensors. Sometimes they just confiscated our letters if they think that the majority of the letter had to be censored. However, I don't think my letters were censored that much. I did receive letters which had many windows, though.

Q: How was the life in the interment camp?

Well, the government had to provide our food which was exactly the same as the American military personnel, because we were interned for the military reasons. So



when they ate stacks, then they had to give us stakes. We wanted to eat rice, because we were Japanese. However, we did not receive enough rice. Other than that we had nothing to complain. There must be some difference between our food and theirs, but it was very small, I think.

Q: What did you do everyday?

A: We had to work every day--a kind of a forced labor. It was only one or two hours a day. Then, we had our own self government, so there were those who had to take care of the administration. There were those who had to work in the mess hall, too. So we all worked in one way or another.

Q: What did you do in your spair time?

A: My friend was a gardener of the hospital, so he had to go to a mountain to get trees and rocks. I used to go with him. He also brought some trees to curve masks, and many figures.

I liked "Sakuhachi", so I practiced it. There were those who played "Go" or "Shogi". All these things were provided for us. In the beginning we did not have anything. Well, in the beginning the authorities were somewhat afraid and they treated us with quite rigidity. They did not know anything about japanese. (There were some German POW's, too.) So we did not have a canteen or any store to buy anything. However, toward the end, a merchant



of Bismark was allowed to open a store there, and sold all kinds of things. We also opened a canteen, too. However, it was so cold and we suffered a lot because of this. It became below 15° to 20°.

Q: Was there any interesting things happened there?

A: No, I don't remember any. We were allowed to practice our own religion. There were Christian church functions as well as Buddhist functions. It was the same in every camp. However, military camps were a little stricter than the others. Every one, both POW's and us, had to wear a shirts with "WP" mark on his back with numbers.

However, we did not participate in war or anything like that, so I felt that it was over zealous conduct on the part of the government. That's what I think. They must be looking at us with a certain prejudice. We were treated exactly like POW's. One time the labor was so hard that all of us went into a strick<sup>ke</sup>. Then an officer came and shot a pistol into the ground. So we dug up the bullet from the ground and sent it to the Counsel General of Spain and protested their conduct. However, our petition did not produce any result. You see, Spain acted as a neutral country. They were supposed to see to it that we were treated fairly.



Q: When you went into the strick, did they retaliate?

A: No, they didn't do that. I suppose they never had an intention of shooting any one of us. However, this happend when we were transferred to Santa Fe. There was another group dispatched ahead of us. There were 3 sick persons in that group. The place where the trainsstoped was in the middle of a desert. In any case, we had to get off in the middle of desert and had to walk to the next train depot. So these three sick people got left behind, because they could notkeep up with the rest of healthy people. Then a guard thought that they were trying to escap, so he shot them with a pistol. Those three people died because of the bullet wounds. This happened with the group which went ahead of us. Well, they called us to dig holes. So I went to work, then found out that those-were graves for those three people.

Q: Was there any case where Japanese foght against the government or the guards?

A: No, I don't think so. I heard that there were some troubles at the Tule Lake Camp, but nothing like that with us. Most of the people who were interned were leaders of communities and were very reasonable. Many of them were in their middle ages and over, so there was no such troubles. So they would not be violent. However, some people did demonstrate. Our camp-was divided into two groups; one group who felt that Japan would lose the war and the other. who felt that Japan would win.



There were those who translated American newspaper articles into Japanese and pass them around. There were those who spoke strongly in favor of Japn winning the war. There were no shortwave radios on the ground, so only thing they could do was to speak strongly against such news articles.

There were no such persons who wanted Japan to lose. They all were Japanese after all. However, we felt that the best thing we could hope for was to come to peace treaty as quickly as possible, since we knew japan could not last too long. There were those who wanted to go back to Japan. There wer six to seven people in our camp in Poston who made some trouble in relationship to ~~NO-NO~~ and YES-YES goups.

They were in my own unit. They were super petriots. They had a firm conviction that Japan would win the war. They were not that young people either. Some of them were released to the Tule Lake. I guess most of them were sent to Tule Lake and went back to Japan on the exchange ship. However, some of them did come back to America after the war.

Q: What else do you remember from the camp?

A: Most of the internees were very educated people and enjoyed various sports. They played softball, "sumoh" or drama. We had authorities in each of these areas. I remember especially the play which they used to put on. They



were good actors and we really enjoyed them. There was a man who made wigs, those who made various kimonos and costumes for play. So this drama group was very active one. They used to put on all kinds of good plays and entertained us.

Q: They made "Katsura" (wig), too?

A: Yes. They got necessary materials through canteen, and made them. We were able to obtain any books we wanted, though we had to buy with our own money. There were those who asked WRA to send their books from the warehouse.

I don't know whether or not you know him, but there was a minister by the name of Rev. Kushi Ishikawa in Chicago. Later he became a minister in Doshisha Theological Seminary in Japan. In any case he was a Japanese school teacher, that's why he was interned. There was also a strict pacifist and minister of Netherline church, too. The government didn't like absolute pacifists either. In the hearing they said that they were against Japanese militarism, however, they were also against American military, too. So they were detained till the very end. They did not release them at all. This man sent a petition to go to a theological seminary in New York. But they did not allow him to go. I feel that American Government was not reasonable at that time. They were not



in an ordinary state of mind.

Q: Did they try to influence you with propaganda?

A: No, they did not do that.

Q: Did you hear any problems from your family?

A: No, I didn't. They even came to see me once. I could not bring them into my room, but I could see them in a meeting room. We were separated by a screen, and it was just like a jail. We could talk to them through the screen.

I felt very sad. I thought, "They must be very cautious and doubting Japanese that much." However, I cannot think of any one who did something bad or against rules. They all were gentlemen from Los Angeles, San Francisco, Alaska and south America. They collected newspaper reporters, and those people whom they felt were important to Japanese community and could be dangerous. In the beginning they detained over 20,000 people. However, the ones who were detained till the end were about 8,000.

They had many hearings and those who passed were sent back to prospective camps to join their families. Those who were left till the end were summoned at Santa Fe. It might have been about 6,000 people. Those Japanese POW's were still spirited people and the government thought that they might be a bad influence for the



interned, so they separated us and sent the POW's to Wisconsin after about 6 months. Captain Aramaki, who came in to the Pearl Harbor in a submarine, were captured and was sent to Wisconsin. Those POW's who were in our camp were the Navy personels who were captured in Alasca or in South Pacific by submarins, or off the coast of Ogasawara Island, or battle of Midway. Those people were the main group of people. They were the ones who came out of the windows or the chimneies of the sinking ship. They were picked up by the American ships while they were floating on the sea. There were at least 200 people there. I suppose the ones who were on the deck were quickly picked up by Japanese destroyers. Americans did cruel things, too. I heard that in South Pacific, they picked up only one Japanese soldger, and they machinegunned the rest of the soldgers who were floating and waiting to be resqued. This was told by one of those POW's, so I don't know how true that is.

Q: Whatelse do you remember?

A: At that time, I felt a lot of hardship, but now only thing I can remember is good thing. (laugh)

We were of course guarded by the ber hed wires and guard towers where soldgers were watching us day and night. There were no such persons who wanted to escape. There was no need to watch us like that. You just couldn't



escape, because Japanese were easily identifiable. In the beginning they did not let us out of the camp. However, they began to understand us, they would let us go out. We used to take trucks into mountains to get wood or go to town to buy some things. Not everyone could go out, though.

When I came to Santa Fe, the third camp, I found that the child administrator was a man from Oakland. He said, "I'm buying apples from Watsonville, but it is very expensive. There are some local apples, so I would like you to go and find out about it." So I said, "Well, that's a good thing. People here are cooped up and very irritable. If we take them to the apple ranch and pick apples, it would release their tensions."

So I went to an apple ranch and negotiated the price, and bought the entire crop. Then I went to the station child and asked them to send a truck and pickers. Of course a guard was a driver. I took 7 people at a time to pick apples. Well, people were really happy to get a chance to go outside. On the way home they could take some apples home. They picked up some metals and made knives and chisels and made all kinds of tools. People were really happy about that. This continued from October to December. It started to snow after December, so we could not continue. This is the apples that we ate



and also made apple juice or apple souse. You see, we could take only 7 people at a time, so we drew lots to decide people who got to go out. I was only one from each barrack. People remembered this till this day. Sometimes I meet people who were able to go out with me at that time. They remenise that period and say, "It was a lot of fun, wasn't it!!"

In the morning we used to pass a beautiful areas. So by the time we arrived at the apple Ranch, it was already 11:00am. We worked about one hour and ate lunch. We took about 1 and 1/2 hour for this. Then we worked another hour and then came home. In watsonville, one could pick over 100boxes very easily. Howev er, we picked only 8 boxes a day. So we could get out many more times.

On the first day an FBI came alone. After lunch I asked him if we could take a walk up to the top of the nearby hill. He said no. So I said, "There is no place for us to escape. Where can we go? Everyb dy can identify us and there is no use for us to escape. So why don't you try us." And I told the people, "When I blow whistle, please come down the hill." So I persuaded the FBI to try it once. And he did. After about one hour and a half I blew whistle and everyone came down. After that he just layed down and took a nap while we enjoyed climing the hill.



This ranch belonged to a person by the name of Williams. We used heavy equipments and also trucks to bring the apples and stored them in his warehouse. He trusted us, too.

Q: Q: You had experience with apples, right?

A: Yes, I did. I could estimate approximate tonage, so I knew how much that crop was worth. However, one had to have some experience with apple ranch to do this kind of negotiation and work. The chief administrator could not do that, but I could. He was a very good man. He gave me a pass, so I could go out anytime I wanted. There was a guard who was a former teacher. He took me home for a dinner and was very kind to me. He must understand Japanese, too.

All of us were middle aged people and over, so we did not do any unreasonable things. We acted from a common sense. This Mr. Williams began to trust us very much and asked me if I could find somebody who could work for him. I said to him, "What are you talking about. All these Japanese people are very rich people. The reason why they are here is because they were detained here because of the war. When they go back, they are all big farmers. So there is no one who wants to work for you."



Well, he was really surprised. You know we had Mr. Minami from Guadalup in our camp. There was the owner of Yorozu from Sacramento. Mr. Ishimaru from Stockton was there, too. Mr. Minami was a super farmer who had 6,000 acres of land in Guadalup. It was really bad for him because people in Guadalup did not want him to come back, so he could not go back there for a long time. So he was not realeased from the internment camp for a long time. Finally he was able to return to his own home town.

Q: Those who were specially interned were community leaders, weren't they?

A: Yes, they were. They were all established businessmen or big farmers. There was no manual labors. There were Japanese school teachers, Buddhist priests and a few christian ministers. There was no persons who was poor. There was a dance teacher, too. He was a very famous teacher and they said one of his diciple in Hollywood wanted to come to see him so he petitioned, but was denied. The owner of "Kashu Mainichi" (California Daily) Mr. Sei Fujii, Mr. Gongoro Nakamura were there, too.

Q: You must be one of the youngest person in the camp?

A: Yes, I was. In fact, I was the 4th youngest person in the camp. Others were very established and dignified people who were middle age and over. All of them were



very rich people. I was a treasurer of the canteen. They used to bring checks to my room which were sent by their wives. We used to carry 8 to 9 thousand dallers. I used to hold that much money with me. They could take out only a certain amount a month. So they used to borrow others name to take money out. There was a canteen, and so they could buy food and other materials. Barbar shop used to charge us only 10¢, so you can see how big that money was. They were all rich people.

In the begining there were some labors who were picked up by FBI's. However, those people were given jobs to do some landery or shining shoes or others and got money for it so that they would have some spending money. When we moved to the military Internment camp, those people were pulled out and moved to elsewhere. When we had hearings those people were returned to their families. When we came to Santa Fe, there were people who left internment camp on parole. There was also a family camp in Christal City. There, family members were allowed to come and live with them. People could apply to go there and live with their families. I was released on parole and went to join my family in Poston. I was interned in 1941 and detained there for 2 years and 2 months, so I was interned till 1943. Then, the war ended while I was still in Poston.



Q: How was it in Poston?

A: Well, I was glad and releaved to be with my family.

However, I felt the housing condition was very bad. The whole family was packed in a small room of a barrack. The wall was made of rough lumbers, and holes all over the place. The facilities were better at the internment camps.

Food also was better at the internment camps. Because they had to treat us just like they did their own military personal.

Q: Your wife must be very glad to see you.

A: I think so, because we had small children, still.

Q: Did you feel any inconveniences in Poston?

A: No, I didn't. However, we had to work there. I was looking for a job. However, I damaged my back in the camp so I rested for a while. Soon people were moving out of the camp, so they were needing some workers. I found out that they needed a fireman, so I became a fireman. I just had to drive a truck. So I could do that much even though I had a bad back.

Q: Did you actually go out to put out fire?

A: Yes, we did. Twice or three times. All the barrack was



burned down. And also a barrack where there was a theater. They did rebuilt the theater, though. Every one helped to do so.

Q: What did you do when there was no fire?

A: We didn't do anything at all. We were curving wood to make birds, or reading books. I also sharted to play gold. Some people played "Hana" or other cards. The fire station became a place where young people came to play. They gambled with cards or Hana. However, I didn't have any interest in gambling.

Q: Do you collect rocks?

A: Yes. However, this is only a recent hovey.

Q: You didn't do that in the camp?

A: No.

Q: What was your hovey in the camp?

A: In the camp? I played "Shakuhachi" (Japanese flute), that's all.

Q: There was not much privecy in the camp, was there?

A: That's true, because the rooms were divided by single rough board. However, we lived with my wife's parents and her brothers and sisters in the same barrack, so in that way it was OK. My wife must felt very secure



having all her relatives with her.

Q: Was there any interesting things happened in the camp?

A: No, nothing big happened after I came back to the camp. However, there was a trouble about the "Loyalty Questions" while I was still in the internment camp.

Q: How did you feel about the loyalty questions?

A: I didn't know anything about that. I just heard about it after I came back to my family. So I don't know.

Q: People were devided on the matter of drafting (volunteering) for the Army.

A: Well, my son did go to the Army. I was very toubled by the fact that they might be sent to fight against Japan. I just did not want them to drow an arrow against my native country. It was very painful. However, I resinged to the fact that they were American citizens and it was their duty to go to the US Army.

However, I was very angry against the US Government, because they interned citizens into camps. But the same government would force Nisei who were citizens to go to war on their behalf. I really felt that it was their (the government's) mistake. Now ti is accepted as



the act which is against the US Constitution. I was really mad about that. We, Issei, were not the citizens of the USA and I felt that they couldn't help about us. But it was definitely a case of discrimination because they did not do that to Italians and Germans. It was only against Japanese that they evacuated them and put them in camps, even if they were citizens of the USA. This was a very inconsistent act. I really didn't want them to go to the Army. This was my true feeling.

Q: How long were you in Poston?

A: I think it was less than 2 years.

Q: Was there church activities?

A: Yes. Rev. Taketa was with us in our camp (the second camp). He was a Presbyterian.

Q: Did they go fishing in the camp?

A: Yes, they did. They went fishing for Koi (carp). And also my sons went to catch turtles in the Colorado river. They used to bring some home. But they had to camp out there to find them. I told them not to go because it was dangerous, but he said that his friends were going, so I let him go. We made turtle soup with it. It was very good. I went to fishing, but it was so hot that I could not go as often as I wanted to. Heat bothered me very much.



Q: Poston was a very quite and peaceful camp, wasn't it?

A: Yes, it was. After that trouble, the leaders of the group were sent to segregation camp, so there were no more problems, after I came back. After I came back from the internment camp I had to give up community activities.

Q: You were sent to the internment camp because you worked for the community, right?

A: Yes, that's right. So the government must have been watching me. All the people who got picked up by FBI's were like that. They were all active in their public affairs for the Japanese communities. They were indeed community leaders.

Q: Your wife must suffered a lot.

A: Yes, she had to care for 3 children. So it was very tough.

Q: How was your son in the Army?

A: He was injured and we almost lost him. However, he recovered and was able to come home. He was in the 442.

Q: Was there any people in the camp who spoke ill of those family whose sons enlisted in the US Army?

A: I really don't know that myself. But when I came back to the camp in Poston, people treated me very coldly.



Because I was interned, so people didn't look at me with warm feeling. So I said, "Well, I didn't go there because I liked it. I worked for the Japanese community and because of that I had to go to the internment camp." That's what I told them. This is really distressing, and regretful.

Q: How was the food there?

A: Well, we always complained. But on the whole it was OK. I had a friend outside. He had a grocery store in Phenix. So when I send him a letter, he used to send me rice and other Japanese food. I was rea-ly grateful for that. His name was Mr. Kato.

Q: Did any of your white friends in Watsonville wrote to your letters?

A: No. I did not receive any and could not write to them, either. When I was in the internment camp, my advisors (white) or Mr. Wilson, or Mr. Ownen, and also the Chairman of the Red Cross, Mr. Glue, and also the head of the Chamber of Commerce, tried to do a lot of things for me. For instance, they wrote letters of affidavit on my behalf. However, I was not released inspite of their efforts. They tried to help me. They must look upon me as a super pro-Japan person! (laugh)



I think Christians were treated a little more leniently. Those people who were elders of a church, for instance, were treated very leniently and were not picked up by FBI's. Even if they were interned, they were released earlier. So they must thought that Christians must be more loyal to the U.S. than the others. However, even though I was a church member, I was not a very regular church goer, so they did not think I was trustworthy. When I was asked about my religious background, I had to say that I was not a very enthusiastic one. This must have something to do with my late release. (laugh)

Q: I heard there were lots of snakes in Poston.

A: I liked to climb mountains, so, I used to do that often. However, I never seen it myself. I know there were lots of them there. I used to look for iron wood or fossils. We used to bring home iron wood and make sticks or small basefall chairs with it. It was a very popular passtime.

Shows were also very popular there, too. So there were many people who were amature actors and actresses and provided good entertainment for the internees. This was important function. I feel these shows made the life in capm bareable and made it possible to maintain peace there.



Q: Did you think that camp life might prolong?

A: No, I never thought that it might be a long time. In the begining I thought that I might be sent back to Japan. However, after staying in various camps over 2 to 3 years, this kind of thought went away. I rould out later that there was an order for me to come back to Japan. This came up in one of the hearing. So they asked me if I wanted to go back to Japan. However, I said that I didn't want to go back to Japan. I didn't apply for that. I had a sister in Japan and her husband was a professional military man. He petitioned for me to come back to Japan. I didn't know anything about that. So I told them that I didn't want to go back to Japan.

In the begining I did feel that they might send me back to Japan because I was a Japanese. I didn't know what to do with my family if I were to be sent back to Japan. I really worried about it. I was not that young anymore and neither my wife. It was just too late for me to start farming in Japan.

Q: When did you come out of the camp?

A: Well, you were allowed to leave the camp before the end of the war. So, we came out of the camp 6 months after the end of the war, because they closed the camp. So



we had to go somewhere. Some people recommended me to go to Seabrook. But I said that I didn't know anywhere except in Watsonville. I told them, "If you let me go back to Watsonville, then I'll go back. However, if you don't let me go back there, then I'll just stay here." So as soon as they allowed me to come back to Watsonville, I came back here. We came back here with a group of other Japanese people. I think it was in 1945, the same year that the war ended. I brought all my family back here.

Q: When you came back here, did you have a place to go?

A: Yes. My family and my wife's family were invited to stay in a summer house of a rich friend in a mountain. I received a letter from him. His name is Mr. Murphy. He was a real estate man. My in-law bought a piece of land from him. In any case, he bought lots of groceries and stuffed refrigerator with food and milk and got ready for us to move in. He even got a car for our use. So when I came back here, I didn't have to stay in a hostel where the most of Japanese returnees had to stay. I had my own house, but a Filipino family lived in there and leased my land, so I could not get back into the house.

From there I went around looking for a job. In the beginning, I worked on a farm as a dayworker. As soon as I came back, I went to my lawyer's office. I wanted to



thank him for writing an affidavit for me. He also helped me with the Lettuce Growers Association. I wanted to find out about it. He asked me how the jail was. He was joking of course. I told him, "I don't have any money. What can I do?" He said, "There is a very few acreage of strawberries in the USA. In fact there are only 3,000 acres of it. At that time there was no strawberries in Watsonville at that time. So he recommended me to grow strawberries. However, I did not have any money to start strawberry farm. Then he said that he would loan me money, so I should start it immediately.

When I think about it, strawberry might do very well, even though I didn't have any experience with strawberry. However, I felt I should try it even if it was a big gamble. So I try to look for a land. But at that time they would not lease a piece of land to a Japanese.

Most of the land was least out and there were very few piece of land available. I had my own land, however, I had tomato there and I knew that strawberry did not grow on the land after you planted tomatoes. Now they could fumigate the land and so you can plant strawberries after tomatoes. However, at that time we couldn't do it. Because I could not find a piece of land, I had to rest for a while. So I just worked doing some day work as a farm labor. I could at least provide food for my family.



On the second year, 1947, I was able to find a piece of land. There was a land Lord by the name of Tony Azebito who had lots of land. He was a Portuguese Nisei. I told him, "Tony, I just can't find anybody who could lease land to me. Would you lease a piece of land to me, since you have lots of them." He said, "What are you going to grow?" So I said, "I'm going to try strowberries." He said, "There is no water." So I said, "Well, you just have to dig a well."

Then he said, "That sounds good!" So he leased me a piece of land. I was about the only one who did strowberries on a large scale, with my partner, of course. We were very first. There were some who grew it ina a small scale, though. There were no strowberry growers after Japanese were evacuated. What I think is that others didn't know how to grow strowberries, so when Japanese left, people here let it die. There were some Filipinos and chinese who were continuing strowberry farm, however, they were in small scales. I didn't know that.

We were really successful, but it was really difficult. The reason was that that piece of land was used by a Japanese farmer before the war. and heard that he could not find the underground water when he dug a well. So I had to study the land very carefully. There was a cliff and i found a small spring where about 2 inch



pipeful of water was running down. If I failed to find other easier water supply, I thought that I could make a dam and pump the water up. That's the reason why I was able to lease the land.

We planted strowberries first, since I felt that we could get water somehow. Then, we try to dig wells. The first one did not produce enough water. So we dug the second one. This one was a good one, so we were very successful with strowberries.

Our problem was that there was no pipes available at that time. So I went to Bakersfield and bought second hand oil pipes for the water. This was for the first well. By the time we dug the second well, we had enough pipes available on the market. It was right after the war and we didn't have those things available to us.

First of all nails were very difficult to get. And then, there was no lumbers to build a camp. So I bought an old barn for \$1,000 and took it down and made a shed, garage and shiping shed. As for as our own house, Fort Ord began to sell their barracks. These barracks were sold to those who were veterans. My partners brother was home from the Army, because of his sickness. So we borrowed his name and bought 10 barracks. We took them down, brought them over and built a camp to live in. The land was about 80 acres. The strowberry plants were



distributed to us from the University and did not even have a name. It came from UCD. When we got these plants, we had to promise that we will not make seedlings from the plants and sign the paper. We didn't have enough seedlings, so we planted every other furrow and then let it spread and transferred into the furrow inbetween. This special strowberry plant was very good. It was a great success. The price was good and the crop was good, too.

Q: What happend to your own land?

A: Well, I leased it out, and is still least to the same person. I'd asked that Filipino to move and let the returning japanese use the house. There were many Japanese people who didn't have a place to live. So there were about 4 Japanese families lived in my house. My land was leased to the same person who had least it from the time of evacuation. Even though I came back, I let him continue to do what he was doing.

Q: How long did you continue your strowberry farming?

A: I did that from 1947 to 1967, I think. I retired 8 years ago. I did that for about 20 years.

Q: Have you joined JACL after you came back?

A: No. However, right now I am taking care of the Senior Citizen's club. JACL bought a house for the Senior Citizens, so we have a meetings and fellowship on



every Sunday afternoon.

Q: What kind of job is this?

A: Well, I gather people up and take them over there. We talk a lot about good old times. I also talk to them about current events such as the Watergate. I read news paper and tell them whats happening now. I tolked about Premir Tanaka's resignation or about matters concerning health. We also practice folksongs and play bingo. We do this on Sunday.

Q: What kind of headach did you have for your strowberry farm?

A: The thing which troubled me most was the personal matters, farm laborers. I bought 2 buses and went to town and brought all available Japanese workers to our farm. However, because it was so big an operation that we couldn't get enough labors. There were not that many Mexican laborers eighter at that time. There was no braceros then. So I even had to go to the railroad station and got those transcients. It was really difficult. There were some field where we didn't even touch because there was no laborers, even though strowberries were ripe and full of crop.

The seeds were sent by the UCD and the nursery made the seedlings for us to plant. This lack of laborers



continued until the broceros were brought from Mexico. There were some people who came from Japan as réfgees, but the number of those people were very small.

Our strowberries could be sold as much as we could harvest them. So it was really pity that we could not get people to work for us.

Q: You said that you visited Japan. When was it?

A: It was in 1956, for the first time. I still had the farm, howev er, I had a forman, so I depended on him. Then I went there again in 1969.

Q: How did you feel when you visited Japan for the first time?

A: Well, by that time Japan was on the way to recovery and there was no remains of war any more.

Q: Did you get to see your sister?

A: Well, my sister died before I went back to Japan. I had my parent still living. My father and my step mother were still well, then.

Q: How did you feel when you visited Japan?

A: I really had a good time, because I was born there, and was raised there. So it was really "natsukashi Katsuta" (deer experience). However, I did not want to go back and live there.



There was a time of depression for strawberries. In the begining there were only 6,000 acres of strawberries, but it began to increase and became 8,000 acres and finally it reached 30,000 acres. In the begining it was 25¢ per pound. However, it becae 6¢ per pound. So it became very difficult to continue. It was around 1963, I think. At that time many Japanese went bankrupt. However, we were able to continue, though.

Q: When you retired, did you give it to your son?

A: No. We sold all of our business. Because my children are not farmers. They went to Detroit University and graduated in pharmacology and became a pharmacist. My daught is a beautician. The other son went to the Navy from a Jr. college. I didn't want him to go, but all his friends were going. So he went, too. He finished his training and came to Oakland. However, he died of illness. He also wanted to be a pharmacist with his brother, so he was preparing himself for it. It was really too bad.

Q: When you look back your life, do you think you went through a lot of suffering?

A: Well, I think so. If you are a farmer, you would go through many headachs. bit fpr me the time of internment was the most difficult time. It was very difficult psychologically. I really had to wrestle with the



decision as to where I should go from there, go back to Japan or stay in the USA. When I faced that much of overt discrimination and rejection, I did not know if I could continue to live in this country, even though I had decided to live in this country very early and bought a pice of land. Especially when the government evacuated my children who were the citizens of the USA. I was really disturbed by this.

Q: They say that the hardship is good for you. Do you agree?

A: Well, I do. However, it must have a meaning.

Q: What kind of things whould you like to teach your grandchildren?

A: Two of my grandchildren were married. One of them went to the Michigan Univsersity for Aeronautic Engineering course. I wanted to tell them all kinds of things about Japan. However, I must speak Japanese and they in English, so it has been very difficult.

Q: What kind of things would you like to tell them?

A: I would like them to have a pride in the fact that they are Japanese ancestry. Of course they made a mistage of going into the war, because of the lack of foresight on the part of the leadership. However, Japan do possess



very high quality morals. There is very few criminals among Japanese. So I would like them to know the excellent quality of Japanese people. I feel that Japanese are very diligent and also very cooperative.

Q: Right now Sansei are very interested in Japanese Cultures.

A: Yes, I think so. Sansei in San Francisco are very interested in Japanese culture. However, Sansei here are not that way, yet. Here, persons such as I, who is old and white headed, must take care of the old folks who had went through such a difficult time. Young folks seems to be disinterested in taking care of them. So I have to do it.

So, I always say that some Nisei should take over my job, however, I cannot find anybody like that. In Watsonville, there are 175 people over 65, including Nisei, of which 114 are Issei. Most of those Issei are widows. There are about 8 people who are 90 years and over. So the most of Issei are around 80 years old. The young people at the center are 74 to 75. Those people need to speak Japanese, but there are very few places where we can speak Japanese. At home Nisei children speak in English. TV is also in English. The only thing we see there is just peoples' movements and it is very lonesome. These people need to get together



and speak Japanese as much as they can, to their heart content. So by listening to a speaker about Japan, listening to "Rokyoku" or popular music, all these things which are in their mind could find some expression. This kind of activities helps them a lot. So I'm managing these activities especially paying attention to this need.

About 10 times a year, we send out a free bus tours. (Please take this. This is a report from 1973.) I started this in 1971 and so I've worked with the center over 3 and 1/2 years. The local JACL pays the rent for the center. However, the rest of these expenses comes from the donations. So we can provide fee buses or free dinners during thanksgiving or Christmas holidays, Fathers Day or Mother's Day. We usually have parties on these occasions with dinners.

On the average about 33 people come every Sunday. Of course I pick them up who need transportation. Some times I make 3 trips. Then I have to take them home. However, once you bring them, they usually find their way home.

If Sansei people don't realize soon, all the Issei will be gone. I really feel Issei must keep themselves busy so that their mental process would not slow down. We



must give them enough stimulus, for instance, I lead games which are full of surprises. I also teach Japanese traditional folk song by record, since I'm not very good at singing. In the beginning I write out lyric on a several papers and hand it to them saying, "I'm just loaning it to you. So please copy it yourself." And as you do so, please try to remember it." So later on I take these paper away from them.

Q: Thank you very much for all the information. May I release this tape to students?

A: Yes, of course if there is anything of value.

Q: Do you think we could hold a literary property right to this interview in case we publish this interview?

A: Yes, of course.

Q: Would you please sing this?

A: Yes. Address, too?

Q: Yes, please. Enter the date, too. It's Feb. 10, 1975. Thank you very much for your time. What is that?

A: This is my biographical record, but I cannot give this to you. (laugh) This is an Agricultural club record. I am a board member of this club. This club choses certain people every year to be honored by the emperor's Citation. We chose one or two in Watsonville who have contributed to the community through agriculture, or others. My district is region of Watsonville, Santa Cruze county,



San Benito country, and one more, totaling 3 counties.

Every year I recommend one or 2 persons for this purpose.

I have to prepare a biography for each person.

Q: Have you received a citation?

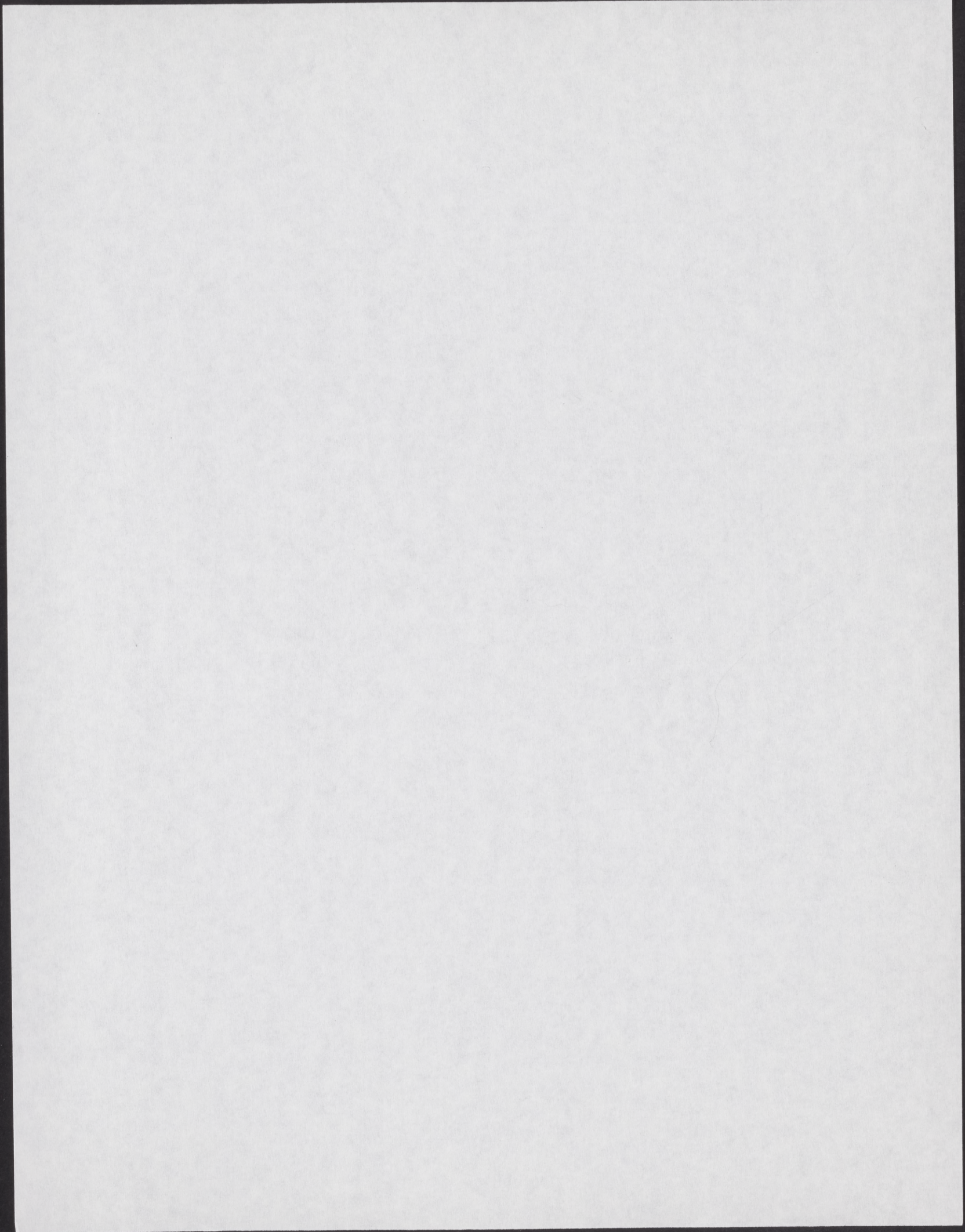
A: Yes, I also have received one.

Q: You are really contributing so much to the community.

A: No, not at all. I'm just doing it for myself, so that  
I can prevent my own senility.

Q: Thank you very much again.







# 20

(Interview with Mr. Kizuka)

Today is October 7, (1973) at the church in Watsonville.  
The weather is fine.

Q. Mr. Kizuka what part of Japan are you from?

A. Oaza-minami, Nishi-machi, Asakura-gun, Fukuoka-ken,  
the country side.

Q. When were you born?

A. May 22, (Meiji-34)

Q. What were your parents' name?

A/ My father's name was Tokubei Kizuka, and Toyo was my mother's.

Q. How many brother and sister do you have?

A. I was the only son by my fathers first marriage, but had a  
half-sister by my step mother.

Q. Until what age did you live in Japan?

A. Until I was 17 years old.

Q. Did you enjoy your life during those years in Japan?

A. I was young then, so I don't think I could say, it was  
neither enjoyable nor miserable one.

Q. Do you have any memories of happy occasions or fun?

A. My memory of a happy occasion is when I was apraised by a  
teacher in the school, and the memory of a sad occasion was  
Having to work on the community projects of the village with  
grown ups since my father was away.

Q. Were your parents gone, then?

A. They left for the U.S.A. when I was 6 years old.

Q. When did you come to U.S.A.?

A. December, 1917. -- the last part of November

Q. What was the reason ?

A. My father wanted me to come.

Q. Why did he call you?

A. Probably, to make me work.



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Q. From where did you sail?

A. Nagasaki

Q. What was the name of the ship?

A. Tenyo-maru.

Q. Which port did the ship stop before if completed the voyage?

A. From Nagasaki to Kobe, then Yokosuka.--As we came to Yokosuka which used to be the Imperial navy base, the ship grounded right in front of the light house, so we had to spend 7 days there. They had a tug boat trying to pull us out when the tide came in but it did not work, so a navy ship pulled us out. From there we sailed to Hawaii, making a brief stop in Yokohama port, and finally made it to the U.S.A.

Q. Where did you land in America?

A. San Francisco.

Q. Did the immigration check your papers?

A. I went to the immigration bureau and spent about three days there .

Q. Did you go to the Angel tower?

A. Yes

Q. Did someone come to meet you?

A. My father came to meet me.

Q. What was your impression?

A. Other than guessing from the picture, I had no idea how my father looked, when I met him I could not recognize him, --it was like we were strangers.

Q. When I was at the immigration bureau there was a guy name Honda. When his father came to meet him, he thought I was his son, because his son was very big when he was young.



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And my father thought Honda was I, because I was small when I was a young boy.

Q. What was your impression of San Francisco?

A. Big city with huge western style buildings.

Q. What kind of the people did you see in San Francisco when you landed?

A. Japanese town was located in the South Park, suburb. So I went directly to South Park from port. I did not see the main part of the town. There were a lot of brides that came from Japan to marry by sending pictures. There were mostly Japanese in South Park except a few white people.

Q. So you stayed in a hotel in Japanese town?

A. Yes

Q. What was the name of the hotel?

A.

Q. So you stayed in San Francisco for a while?

A. I spent two days there, then I went to visit a friend who was running a shoe repair shop on Grove St. in Oakland. There I spent about 4 days before I came to Watsonville.

Q. That was where your father was working wasn't it?

A. Yes, he was in the apple business at that time.

Q. Did you meet any Japanese when you came to Watsonville?

A. Mostly Japanese. My step mother's relatives were there, and having been in the apple business there were many laborers living in a camp in the area. So I didn't see white people other than the neighbors.

Q. Was your father the foreman?

A. No, he leased the apple orchard.



Q. Has he been doing that for quite a long time?

A. I was 6 years old then, when he came here, and 11 years later I came.

Q. So, He had been in the business for 11 years?

A. He didn't start right away when he got here. He had had the business for about 6 or 7 years when I came to America.

Q. Do you remember any of your sad, happy, or hardship memories?

A. My sad memory was that I was terribly home sick, and another one was I could not get to go to school like I understood before I left Japan.

Q. So you had to work at the orchard?

A. Yes, I had to help my parents.

Q. When did you get married?

A. In 1923.

Q. Did you start your home in Watsonville?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you feel any discrimination in Watsonville at that time?

A. In that time, it was getting better toward Japanese, but when we used to go to the movies on Sandays, they never ushered us to a seat in the center section, which was the best section. If we sat in the center section they came and told us to move to another section. Other than that I did not feel any discrimination.

Q. Since you were working for your father, you didn't have much income. Did you?

A. In the weekends he gave me about 3 to 5 dollars.

Q. Did your father give you a house, or did you buy it?

A. He was back in Japan when I got married, so I stayed with Mr.



Matasaburo Mine, who was the business partner, out after about three years, in 1929, I bought my own property with land and a house.

Q. How much did it cost?

A. It cost 7 thousand dollars.

Q. Was there any Japanese group in Watsonville?

A. Yes, there were several.

Q. Can you tell me some of the group activities you had participated?

A. I was 29 then about one year after I bought my own land, I became a board member of the Japanese group until world war II. Also I was in the Kendo group, and the Heimusha-kai, which was established after the Manchurian War, and later became the political issue before W.W.II began. I was also involved in Japanese school, Nihongo-gakuin, which was built on my property. That was the reason I was imprisoned.

Q. What kind of amusements were there among the Japanese group?

A. In about 1918-1920, among Japanese people, most people played Chinese gamble, but there were a lot of demonstrations by church groups in the main street protesting gambling. But the young men who came to U.S. weren't satisfied with that type of amusement, so we organized a group called Futaba Club. And we went to the Christian church and the Budha church to have speech contest, haiku study, and singing parties, as well as English study in group. And we also published a monthly magazine. These were the activities I was involved when I was young.

Q. Did your children attend the school in Watsonville?



A. Yes.

Q. Which school did they go?

A. In River Side Road, there was a small school across the street from our property, that is where my son went, until we were evicted.

Q. You didn't send your son to Japan. Did you?

A. No.

Q. Were there any discrimination in his school?

A. No, they were very nice to Japanese. Especially, there was an American who lived near by and was a school counselor who was very nice to us. Even when we were building our Japanese school, he suggested us to use their school. But we didn't want to get them in trouble so we went ahead and built it on our land.

Q. He was a progressive teacher wasn't he?

A. Yes, he was, but also there was a very influential man in the town who was nice to us.

Q. When did you learn about Christianity?

A. It was about 1918 or 1919. When Mr. Masaki Yagoichi came to pick apples for me, he asked me to go to the church with him. That was the first time I had been to church.

Q. Tell me about the church you went to at that time. How things were then.

A. At that time, there was a minister name Fujimoto, who was a graduate of Meiji-Gakuen. Also there were many young Japanese men from Japan, and they some times attended the budhist church, but mostly attended the Christian church, And they had a meeting once a week in the back room of the Salvation



Army building to discuss about Christianity. Later there were many people who were baptized. When I was baptized there were 4 or 5 others with, and even after that there were some more. But those people who got baptised did not come to church after that, except two or three people. One of the reasons was that they moved away elsewhere, and the other was that they weren't interested in religion. It could have been the church, which stressed on formality and had exclusive attitude against smoking, drinking, and gambling. They believed that they were son of God and showed superior attitude. So they failed to guise people.

Q. Tell me about the depression era of 1929-1930.

A. I was farming then, so it did not affect me so much. I was raising sugar beets, tomatoes, etc. It was actually a good year for me. I did not feel any depression having been able to hire Philipinoes for 15 to 20 cents an hour.

Q. W.W. II was a big incident, where were you then?

A. I was in Watsonville.

Q. What were you doing when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A. I was home for lunch after working in the field, and had the radio on. When they announced the attack, I was so surprised I just could not believe it. I did not know what was going to happen to us, so I couldn't even work.

Q. Were you confined. (imprisoned) ?

A. Yes.

Q. Where were you imprisoned?

A. About one week after the war broke out, we were taken to Bismark, North Dakota. We stayed there for about 7 months,



then we were taken to Roseburg, New Mexico, which is located in the middle of the desert, and very hot. I was taken to Santa Fe, and there I spent two years and four months.

Q. Where were your family?

A. They were in the Boston Concentration Camp.

Q. During the war, couldn't you stay with your family?

A. No, but I was able to join them later. After I was paroled, I went to join them, so I lived there for about one year.

Q. Do you know around the Boston area?

A. Yes, but I only lived there for one year so I did not have chance to know much. When I joined them, they had a very nice school, and were many amusements, such as flower arranging, and recitation of Chinese poems among men, and movies once a week. It was well equipped camp.

Q. How old were your sons, when you were evicted?

A. My oldest son was a senior in High School, and the other two were in Grammar School.

Q. Did they go to school in Camp?

A. Yes, the oldest son joined in the U.S. Army, so when he came back he went to the University of Michigan. Since he had finished high school in Watsonville, his record came from Watsonville High.

Q. When did you return<sup>n</sup><sub>A</sub> to Watsonville after being released from the camp?

A. September, 1946.

Q. Did you go to church during your imprisonment?

A. No, very seldom I went. I was not very faithful, but my children went to Sunday school.



Q. Did these experiences change your belief in God?

A. Yes, I lost faith in God, because of the war.

Q. Was it because you became a Christian through an American?

A. No, in my case, I became a Christian through Japanese.

Q. Can you tell me why you lost faith in God?

A. It is rather hard to say. When a person was imprisoned in a camp surrounded with barb-wire which has no freedom, he loses all the hopes, and gets to where he doesn't care anymore. That is how I felt. Especially for some one who had his own business, and suddenly lost every thing, and got imprisoned. It is very hard. Particularly, after what the U.S. Government did to the American born Japanese; they deprived the rights as an American citizen, but yet, they imposed the duties as an American. That I did not like. If they impose duties on them, they should recognize the rights too. Of course, I was a Japanese born, so I could not become naturalized. But Nisei was born in America, and educated in America; They are true Americans. It is not right to deprive the rights of these Americans. Especially knowing that these Americans who supposed to be the believers of Christianity, did things like this. I did not like this at all.

Q. When you came back to Watsonville, how did they react toward Japanese?

A. I had an American friend in Watsonville who owned a summer house, and wrote me saying that they got the house ready for us, so we came back and went straight to their summer house, without having to stay in the Hostel like some other people did. Our American friend was so nice, even had food in the



freezer, ~~and~~ So my own family and my wife's sides' relatives all moved in there. The American friend even <sup>had</sup> a car for us to use . We stayed there for about a week untill we rented our own place.

Q. What did you do after a week?

A. We still had our own house, which was rented then, and still had workers that lived there, so we had to rent elsewhere until they evacuated.

Q. What was the hardest thing after you returned?

A. In 1947 after I returned to Watsonville, the first thing I did, I went to see Mr. Hutson, who was a lawyer. I told him that I am back, but I have no money, I don't know what to do. So he said don't worry about money you'll get a loan, I used to grow tomatoes and sugar beets, but he suggested me to start to grow strawberries since it is in demand and I had a lot of helping hands. So I started to look for a land to lease, but no one wanted to lease land to a Japanese. So I finally went to see my old acquaintance from before W.W.II. His name was Mr. Toni Osbild(?), a portugese decendant, who lived in Elkhorn. He owned about 5 hundred acres of land. I told him the situation I was in, not been able to lease land anywhere, and asked if he would, since he has so much. He offered to lease 125 acres of the land along Salinas Road, and even offered to dig a well for water. That is how I got started on my strawberry farming in 1947. We were the second group of people to start in Watsonville after the War. But we were the only people who continued on, because the other people had quit after on harvest.



Q. Was the land very fertile?

A. Yes.

Q. How many acres did you farm?

A. With the partner, Mr. Takiyoshi, we had about 70 to 100 acres.

Q. It's very large area. Wasn't it?

A. Yes, It was. The problem was that we did not have a house in the field, so we had to build a house, but at that time there was a big shortage of lumber and nails to build a house. So we bought an old barn, and disassembled it very carefully piece by piece. With that we built a shed and a house, but it was not enough. About that time they had some old Army barracks for sale at Ft. Ord but only to a soldier. Luckily, my partner's brother was a soldier, so he bought 6 barracks for us. But we could only buy 5 lbs. of nails per person, so we all took turns to go buy, and we finally finished building it. It was not easy.

Q. Was it for the workers?

A. No, For us to live in. Workers lived in hostel, and we transported them in 2 old buses we bought.

Q. Because of your efforts, you could retire early.

A. Yes, it was very good.

Q. Do you have any particular thoughts to say on this?

A. No, nothing especially. Only thing is that because I remained in U.S. I was able to live comfortably. This is my greatest joy.

Q. Even though you got homesick for a time, by deciding to remain in America was the best decision.

A. In 1929 when I bought a land and ~~my~~ when my son was born, I decided to live in U.S. permanently. I thought, since I had



no special education, it would be better for me and my children to remain in America.

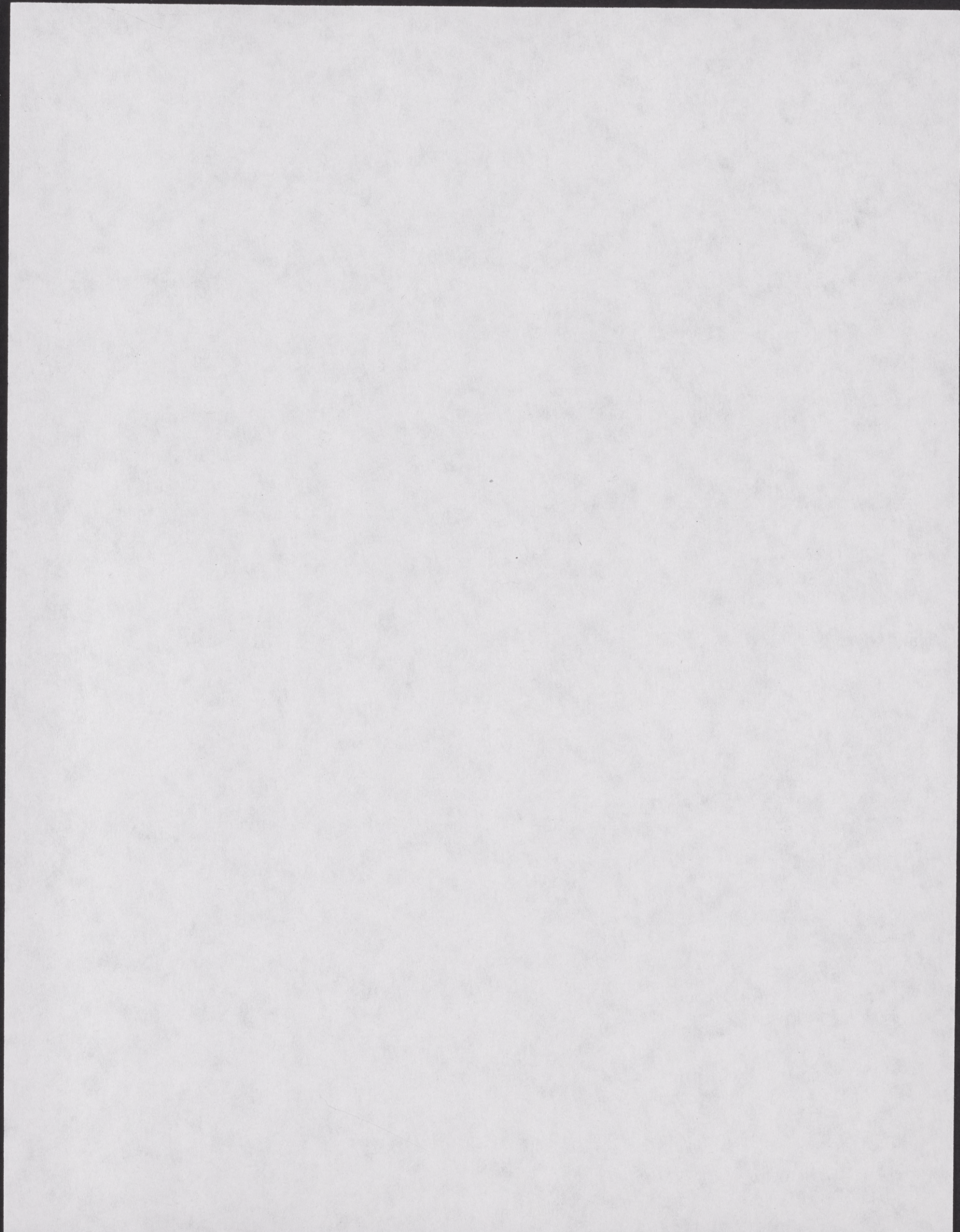
At that time there was complicating law against Japanese becoming a land owner. So I bought in my son's name with three witnesses. There was a judge named Sand, he had always been very helpfull to me. So I went to see him and told about my circumstance; my not been able to buy land and my son was only 4 years old, but I would like to buy the 10 acres of land. He told to get any witness, Japanese or American. But to go through the court procedure, I needed a signature of my son, so the judge said not to worry about it, as long as he is alive, and told me to make sure to pay the tax every year, and when my son becomes 20 years old, he would automatically become the owner. So he told me to go ahead and buy the land. He was very helpful.

Q. It was very helpful for you to have American friends.

A. Yes, I am very grateful. There was a time not easy for us financially when I was farming. But there was Horgan Co. Which had a business deal from my father's time. I went to see him and told I lost money on the lettuce crop, and needed some loan, and being a Japanese no one would trust me enough to make a loan. He said that since he had had a bussiness with my father for a long ~~at~~ time he would loan me some. So I was able to continue farming.

Q. I thank you so much this will be very good material.







Tokushige Kizuka - 4<sup>th</sup> 20  
Fa

I was born in Shimnack of Asakura County in Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan on May 22 of the 33<sup>rd</sup> year of the Meiji era. My parents' names are Tokubei and Toyo Kizuka, and I was the only son in the family, but I had a <sup>step</sup> sister by my father's second wife. I lived in Japan until I was seventeen years old. I do not remember anything that was especially pleasant or sad during that time, except that I felt happy when the teacher at the school praised me when I did well, and that I had to suffer because I had to work hard in the service of the village.

My father came to America when I was six years old, and died of a cold during the same year. I came to America in November of 1917 because my father in America asked me to come to America, perhaps because he wanted me to work. ~~(laughter)~~. I boarded the Tenyo maru at Nagasaki. The ship came to ~~America~~ <sup>America</sup> via Kobe and Yokosuka, where she went aground and was stranded there for about one week. Since two boats could not free the grounded ship, a warship was called in to finally get her going again. The ship then went to Yokohama, Hawaii, and finally came to San Francisco, U.S.A. I was taken to Angel's Island and



was retained there for about three days for a thorough examination; and later was released to ~~the kikyogo~~ my father.

My first impression of ~~America~~ <sup>my father was</sup> that he was just like a stranger; he and I had lived separately for so long. In the immigration office off Angel Island I met a young man by the name of Honda whose father had ~~been~~ <sup>had grown</sup> ~~assumed~~ his son to be a big man since he was a big boy when he was left in Japan. But my father had <sup>expected me to be</sup> ~~thought that I was a little~~ physically small because I had been a small boy. So there was a mix up in the identification of the sons. My impression of the city of San Francisco was this: what big buildings, and no more. The Japanese section of San Francisco was situated at South Park, and was very flat. That is where I was taken directly by a small boat, and that is why I had not seen Market Street and other busy streets. But I saw plenty of picture brides: it was the heyday of immigration of those women. At South Park all residents were Japanese, and I hardly saw any white people there. I was taken to Fukuoka ya, a Japanese hotel in South Park, and there I spent about two days. Later I went to Oakland



## Tokushige Kijika - 2<sup>a</sup>

where one of the men from the same village in Japan, had a shoe repair shop. After having stayed with this man for four days, I left Oakland for Watsonville.

My father was working on an apple orchard and I settled there. There were many Japanese people in Watsonville, and among them were my ~~step~~ <sup>step</sup> uncles on my mother's side.

There were many Japanese people working on the apple orchard. I hardly ever saw any white people except those who lived in the neighborhood. My father was leasing the apple orchard, having farmed for many years, possibly six or seven years.

Speaking about sad experiences in America, I have to mention my loneliness due to the fact that I had left Japan, and that I was not given any opportunity to attend school. I had hoped to go to school to study, and I kept on working on the farm. I was married in 1923.

The <sup>ill</sup> feeling of the white people toward the Japanese was at a low ebb at the time. The only thing I remember in the way of anti-Japanese feeling happened on Sundays when I went to see a movie. It was not possible for me to sit down in the best seats toward the center. I was always led to seat toward the outer end of the theater.



I was making the maximum of three to five dollars a week. My father had left for Japan by the time I got married. That is why I was living in the same house as my father's ~~co-~~ partner Matsaburo Mine. I bought my own house in 1929 after having become an independent farmer. The house was on a farm. The price I paid for the farm was \$7,000 for ~~or ten acres~~ ~~farm~~.

There were many Japanese <sup>clubs</sup> ~~associations~~ in town. About a year after I had purchased the farm, I was elected to serve as an officer for the Japanese Association of Watsonville and stayed in the office until W.W.II. I was also a member of the Kendo-Kai, and also of the Heigusha-Kai, a controversial club which was formed during the Manchurian Incident. I was the treasurer for the Kai. I was also connected with the Japanese language school especially built for that purpose. I was interned because of this connection with the Japanese language school.

In the way of entertainment for the Japanese workers of the time, ~~the~~ most of them spent much time in gambling houses. The Christian churches had a special road side program campaigning against gambling, but for the Japanese gambling seemed to be the only available entertainment at the time. However,



Tokushige Kizuka - 3a

the younger people from Japan, and the Kibei were not satisfied with that kind of entertainment and formed the Futaba Kai. The members of the club attended both The Christian church and the Buddhist church, and ~~they~~ did debating, poem composition, and singing, studied English, and published a magazine once a month.

My children attended The Riverside School which was standing next to my ranch; and ~~I sent~~ the children attended The grammar school until the day of evacuation. I did not send my children to Japan for education. There was no discrimination in the school. All the people in the neighborhood were nice people. When I planned to erect the building for Japanese language study on my ranch, they told me to use the public school facilities instead. But I had to decline the kind offer, thinking that it might cause a problem later on. The teachers were kind, but the members of the Board of Education were still kinder.

I became interested in Christianity in 1918 or 1919. Mr. Masaki Yamaguchi came to pick apple on my ranch, and took me to the Christian church for the first time. The church had the pastor by the name of Rev. Fujimoto who was a Graduate of The Meiji Gakuin. There were many young "Gobijiro" in the area, and even



though some of them attended the Buddhist church, most of them attended the Christian church. They used the room in the back of the present Salvation Army building for meeting every week where the minister would join in for a fellowship. And many of these young men were baptized. When I was baptized, there were four or five others who were baptized at the same time. And many others ~~that~~ were baptized, but most of them ~~disappeared~~ disappeared after baptism and never came back to the church again. There are only two or three who still come to the church. Granted, that some had dispersed to other places, but most of them had dropped out of the church. The reason for this was that the Japanese did not have any concern for religion. The attitude of the church may have been wrong also in that the church was too formal and exclusive. That is why the young men had gone away from the church. The church emphasized that only those who do not smoke or drink could be good Christians and that all others were no good. It could be that the Christians had too much pride, and that only they were the chosen people of God so that they could not guide the young people properly.

During the Great Depression days



## Topushige Kiyuka - 4a

I was farming, and therefore, I did not feel the Depression. During those Depression years I was farming sugar beets and tomatoes, and that is why I was able to make money. The Filipino workers were working at fifteen cents to twenty cents per hour, and this low rate of pay was an advantage to me. I did not feel the depression.

When WW II broke out I was in Watsonville farming. When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor I was driving a tractor. When I came home to eat I turned on the radio and heard about the attack. It was certainly a big surprise, and I could not believe the news to be true, and I could not go back to work. I was interned by the authority about a week after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and was sent to Bismarck, North Dakota. I stayed there at Bismarck for about seven months, and then was sent to Roseburg, New Mexico, a hot desert area. From there I was sent to Santa Fe in the same state, and stayed there for two years and four months. My family members were sent to Poston Relocation Center. There they stayed for three to four years. I was able to get a pass and did spend about a year with them in Poston Camp.



I remember a little about Forton, for I spent only a year in that place. However, I remember a school of good size in the camp, and all the facilities for entertainment were complete. The people were enjoying Hona, Shigin, and weekly movies. The camp was good and complete.

When ~~we~~ I was evacuated from the Coast, my oldest son was a junior in high school, and the two smaller children were still in grammar school. The oldest son was drafted into the Army from the camp. After his discharge from the Army, he attended a college in Michigan. He received a diploma from Watsonville High School because he had completed more than three years of study at the high school.

I believe I came back to Watsonville in September of 1946. I very seldom attended Christian worship service in the camp. My children attended the church in Watsonville, but I was very irregular in church attendance. I have lost my faith because of the experiences I have had during the war. In the first place I was led into Christianity by a Japanese speaking minister. The reason why I have lost faith in Christ is that I have lost all faith behind the barbed wires, and that I started to feel



## Tokushige Kiyuka - 5a

"I ~~would~~ <sup>would</sup> take care of myself," and no longer dependant on anyone. I disliked what the American Government did to the U.S. citizens: it denied the rights but demanded duties from the Nisei. The Government should have given the rights to them, if it asked duties from them. As to us Issei who were not eligible for citizenship, there was not much we could do about the situation. The Nisei who are the citizens of America and were educated in this country should have been given all the rights. I hated the way the Government treated the Nisei, the American Government with the Puritan ethos behind its back.

Just as I was getting ready to return to Watsonville, a friend of mine wrote to me and said that he would open up his summer home for me if I came back. I came back and used that summer home. That is why I have not gone or slept in a hostel. This kind friend had the peaches pilled with meat, and was waiting for me to come back to Watsonville. All my family members and the Mine family, my wife's family, went to this summer home. There we stayed for about a week. The friend even furnished us with an automobile. Shortly after that I



found a home, because my own home were being rented to someone else.

The ranch was being rented to someone, and this man's workers were using my home. Since he could not vacate the house right away, I had to rent a house and move into it.

When I returned to Watsonville, the first thing I did was to go see Mr. Hudson, a lawyer who ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> my adviser for a long time. And I told him that I was penniless, and <sup>asked him</sup> ~~that~~ what was the best thing I could do. He told me not to worry about money, for ~~he~~ could lend me that, and advised me to grow strawberries. I had ~~the~~ grown tomatoes, beets, and lettuce, but he told me to go into strawberry growing, for it was profitable, and besides there were many Japanese people around so that ~~you~~ <sup>you</sup> would have enough labor. I decided to do that and looked all over for a suitable land, but no one would lend any land to a Japanese. Finally a man by the name of Tony Bezaredo of Elcom district who owned about 100 acres of land said that he would lend a land to me on Palmas Road. He told me that this 120 acres of land did not have any pump, but he would dig a



## Tokushige Kiyuka - 6a

well for me. So I was able to rent the land. I immediately rented the land, and I started to grow strawberries that was the year 1947. I was about the second grower of strawberries in Watsonville District. The man who was the first to grow strawberries soon quit the farm. I joined a partnership with Mr. Akiyoshi and farmed between 75 and 100 acres. The thing that bothered me the most at the time was the lack of housing. Houses had to be built, but there was a shortage of lumber throughout America. Nails, too, were in shortage. That is why I had to buy an old barn and tore the building carefully, and built the houses with the old lumber. The houses were still not enough. At the time the old barracks in Fort Ord were put up for sale. But these barracks were not purchasable by the civilians. Only the veterans were able to buy them. Since my partner's brother was a veteran, I was able to buy six of those barracks. The barracks were disassembled and brought ~~back~~ to the farm. At the time only five pounds of nails were being sold to each customer <sup>a day</sup> because of the shortage of the nails. Everyone of us went to the store alternately to buy nails, and the houses were built. This was the



hardest Thing I had to go through. The barracks were not for the workers. They were for my family's use. The workers, most of them being Japanese ~~and~~ stayed in the hostel, commuted back and forth between the ranch and the hostel. I had purchased two busses for that purpose.

I am thankful that I am in America and living in comfort. When I bought the land, I already thought of living in America for good. I already had a child in 1929, and I knew I could do little if I returned to Japan because of my limited education. That is why I thought it was best for my children and me to live on in America. The state enforced strictly the Alien Land Law, and if anyone wanted to buy a land, he had to have citizenship. I had absolutely no qualification to buy a land. However, Watsonville is a very good place. There lived a judge by the name of Mr. Sun, and he did a lot to help me. I asked him for an advice saying that I wanted to buy a land, but that my children were still too young, and that I had no citizenship, so what <sup>was the best thing for me to do</sup> ~~could I do~~. He told me to find <sup>a guardian, either</sup> ~~some~~ Japanese or a Caucasian, ~~who qualified to buy a land~~, and buy



## Tokushige Kiyuka - 7a

a land. Ordinarily a permit <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ necessary for a Japanese to buy a land, but he would <sup>forgo</sup> that requirement. He told me to pay tax on the land, and when the child reached the age of 20, the land ~~will~~ <sup>would</sup> automatically be his. So I was able to ~~by~~ buy the land. He did much for me, and I am thankful to him.

I had to go through some hardship when I was farming. In Watsonville there was a company by the name of Hogen Company owned by the son of the original founder of the company. ~~I went~~ The Company bought and sold apples. I went to ask The Company for a loan because I had lost money on lettuce, and the banks would not lend me any money. The Company answered me and said that since my father had traded with the company, and since ~~he was~~ <sup>I could</sup> be trusted, the company would lend me money. And I was able to continue on with my farming.

- End -